



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of New Hampshire*

*Federal Building
55 Pleasant Street, Room 352
Concord, New Hampshire 03301*

603/225-1552

MEDIA RELEASE

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**Contact: Thomas P. Colantuono
United States Attorney
Alfred Rubega
Assistant U.S. Attorney
(603) 225-1552**

BERLIN MAN SENTENCED FOR IDENTITY THEFT CHARGES

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE – United States Attorney Tom Colantuono announced today that **CHRISTOPHER VELIZ**, 22 years old, of 319 Madison Avenue, Berlin, New Hampshire, was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Concord to “time-served” in federal prison and three years supervised release following his conviction on a four-count indictment for identity theft crimes.

Veliz, a former resident of Derry, NH, pleaded guilty to the charges on September 3, 2004. The indictment charged him with using two different false names and false Social Security numbers to obtain fraudulent New Hampshire Drivers’ licenses between July 2001 and February 2003. Veliz then used the false identification documents to facilitate the commission of bank fraud.

The apprehension and prosecution of Veliz were the result of an investigation by the Identity Theft and Fraud Working Group organized in the U.S. Attorney’s office which brings together both federal and state law enforcement agencies to combat identity theft and fraud. An intensive and coordinated investigation by agents of the Derry Police Department, the N.H. Department of Safety’s Highway Patrol and Enforcement Bureau, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the U.S. Social Security Administration’s Office of Inspector General, and the U.S. State Department’s Diplomatic Security Service resulted in Veliz’s apprehension.

U.S. Attorney Colantuono commended all agencies involved stating, “The vigilance of the Derry Police Department, which first began the investigation of the fraud, followed by the joint efforts and outstanding cooperation among numerous federal and state agencies stands as a fine example of law enforcement work and professionalism at its best. This case should serve as a warning to anyone contemplating identity fraud that they will be detected, apprehended, and prosecuted.”

VELIZ was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Joseph A. DiClerico. Assistant U.S. Attorney Alfred Rubega prosecuted this case.